ABSOLUTE
BATMAN
ALL IN
15+ TEEN+
20
SNYDER
DRAGOTTA
MARTIN
DRAGOTTA

FROM EISNER AWARD-WINNING WRITER
MARIKO TAMAKI AND FAN-FAVORITE ARTIST AMANCAY NAHUELPAN
DC
NEXT LEVEL
BARBARA GORDON
BREAKOUT
MAY
© & ™ DC.
FRAMED. OUTLAWED. HUNTED.

XII
XI
X
IX
VIII
VII
VI
TICK
TICK
TICK
HEHEH
1939
EHE
HEHE
HEHEHEHE
LIBERTY
HAHA
HA
HAAAA

HAHAHAHA

# THE STRAW MAN

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FRANK MARTIN
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LETTERER

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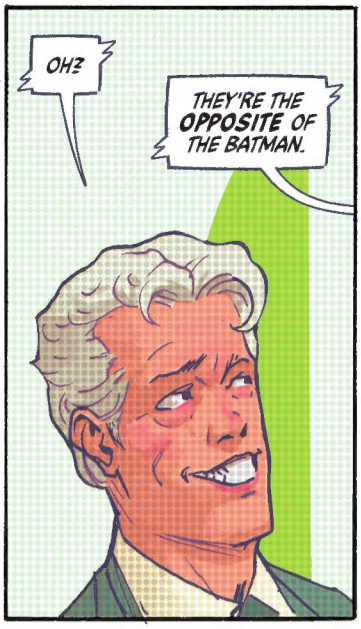
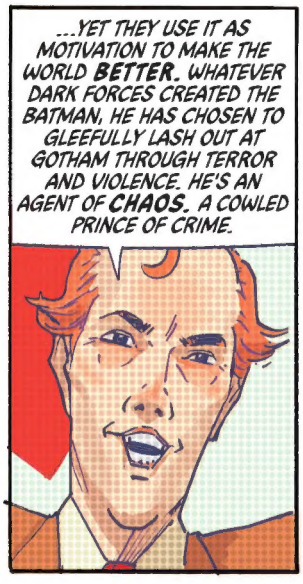
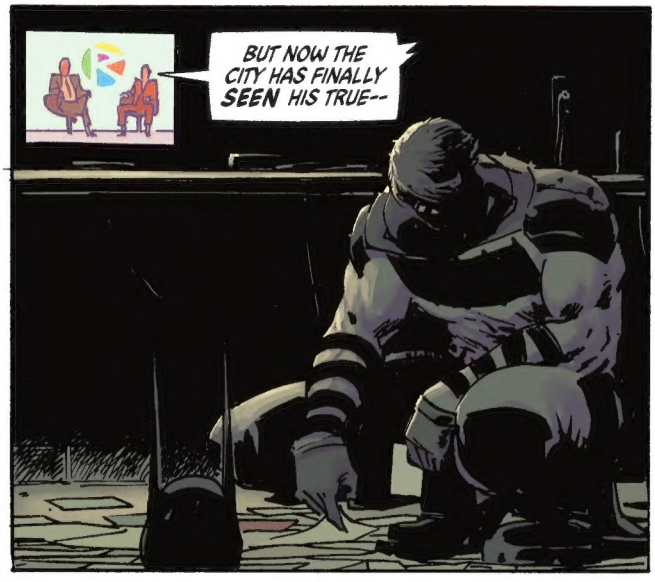
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

IT'S WILD! THE PROGRAM HASN'T EVEN LAUNCHED YET AND ALREADY GOTHAM SEEMS TO HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE ROBINS. EVERYONE HAS THEIR FAVORITE! SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE SECRET TO THEIR POPULARITY, MAYOR HILL?
WELL, BUZZ, AS THE MAN BEHIND THE INITIATIVE, I THINK THE REASON IS VERY SIMPLE.




...YET THEY USE IT AS MOTIVATION TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER. WHATEVER DARK FORCES CREATED THE BATMAN, HE HAS CHOSEN TO GLEEFULLY LASH OUT AT GOTHAM THROUGH TERROR AND VIOLENCE. HE'S AN AGENT OF CHAOS. A COWLED PRINCE OF CRIME.

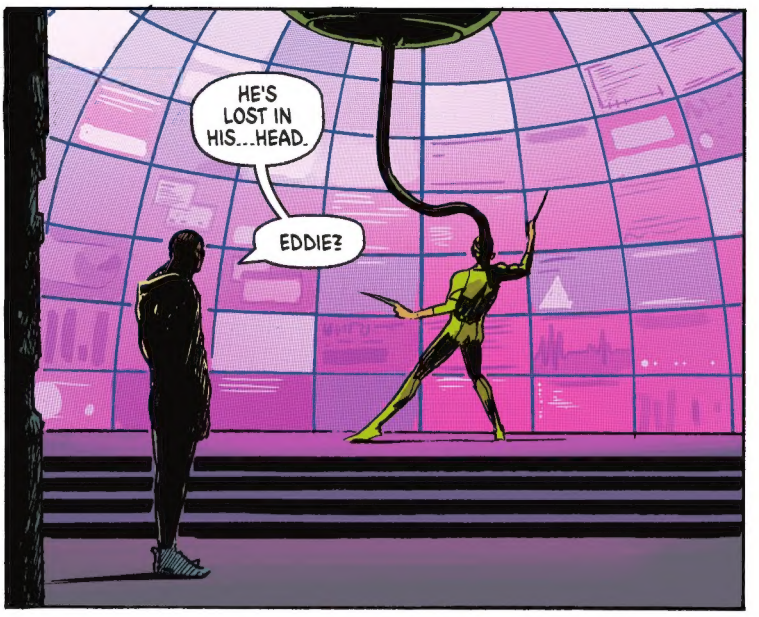


Dr. Crane believes Bruce to be susceptible

BATMAN...?
BATMAN, ARE YOU THERE?
PLEASE, JUST...TELL ME YOU DIDN'T DO IT.
YOU DIDN'T DO THIS, RIGHT? BATMAN!
...DID YOU?

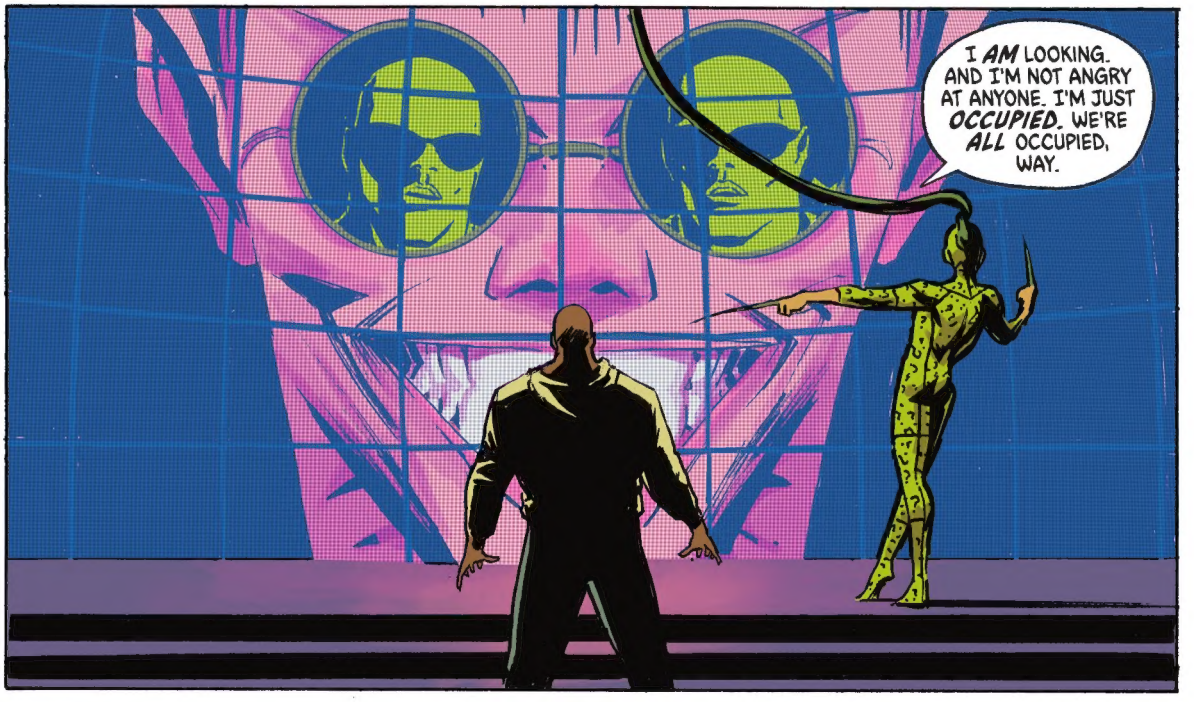
KID?
IT'S BEEN DAYS...I'M GOING TO NEED SOME PROOF OF LIFE OR--
OUT OF THE WAY!
WHAT ARE--
MS. QUINN! IT'S A COMPUTERIZED VAULT! A SIMPLE HAMMER WON'T--
IT'S NOT A "HAMMER." IT'S A NINETY-TWO-THOUSAND VOLT MAGNESIUM-AMPLIFIED DOUBLE LITHIUM ELECTROCHEMICAL THUNDER @#$%. M.A.L.L.E.T. 92. NOTHING I USE IS "SIMPLE," JEEVES. NOW MOVE!
WAMBAM
...DEMON CHILD.
KID? BRUCE!
HE'S GONE, TURNED HIS COMMS OFF, TOO. ANY IDEAS, MS. QUINN?
...OH NO.

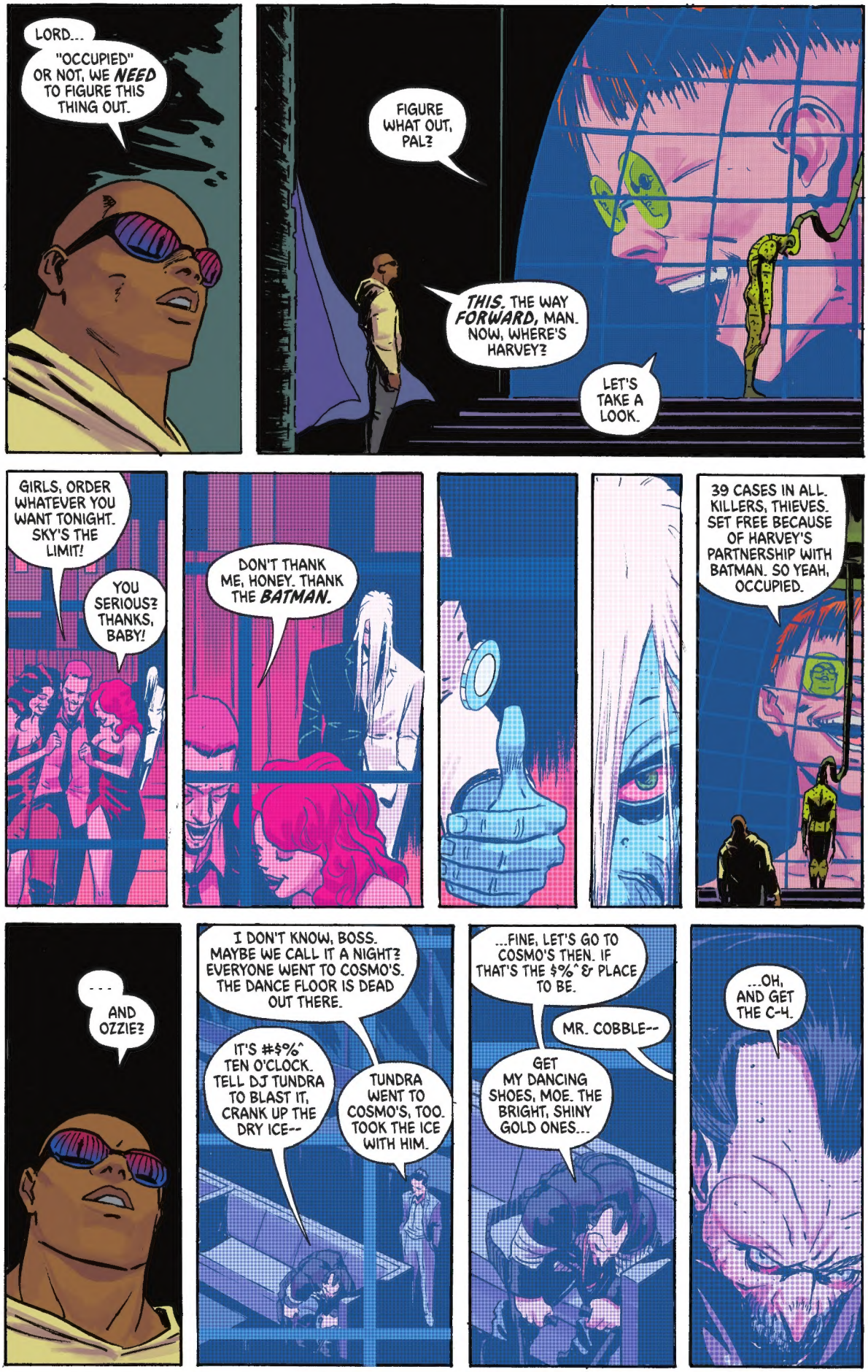
WE HAVE TO HELP HIM, MAN.

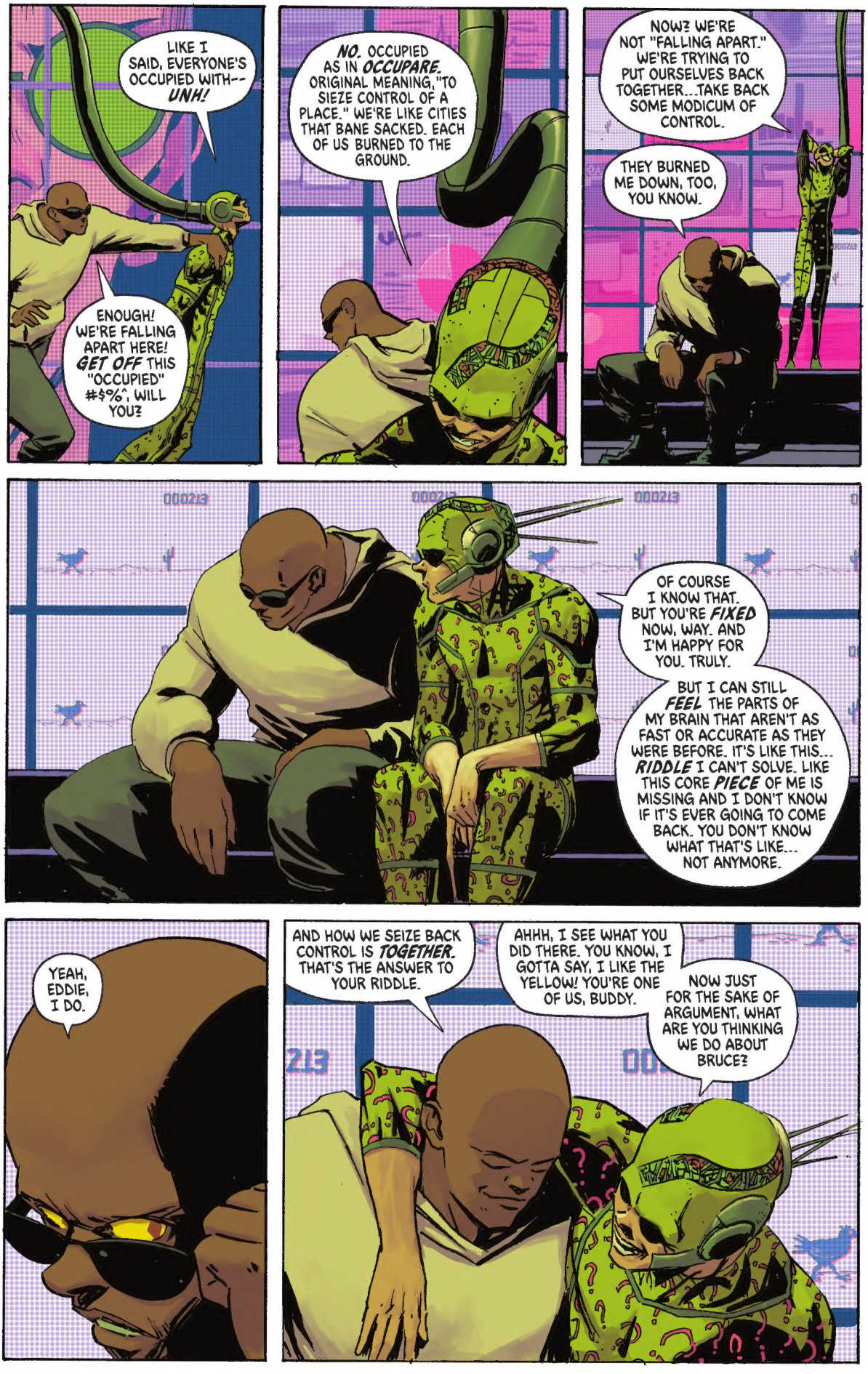

HE'S LOST IN HIS...HEAD.
EDDIE?

ANSWER... "RICCI FLOW WITH SURGERY"!
ANSWER... "NEUTRINOS"!

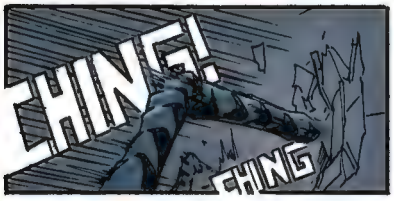
I GET IT, OKAY? YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE ANGRY AT BRUCE. YOU ALL DO, BUT...
DAMMIT, CAN YOU AT LEAST *LOOK* AT ME WHEN I'M TALKING TO YOU?

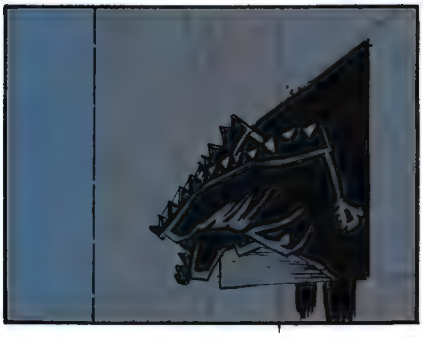

I *AM* LOOKING. AND I'M NOT ANGRY AT ANYONE. I'M JUST *OCCUPIED*. WE'RE *ALL* OCCUPIED, WAY.


LORD...
"OCCUPIED" OR NOT, WE NEED TO FIGURE THIS THING OUT.
FIGURE WHAT OUT, PAL?
THIS. THE WAY FORWARD, MAN. NOW, WHERE'S HARVEY?
LET'S TAKE A LOOK.
GIRLS, ORDER WHATEVER YOU WANT TONIGHT. SKY'S THE LIMIT!
YOU SERIOUS? THANKS, BABY!
DON'T THANK ME, HONEY. THANK THE BATMAN.
39 CASES IN ALL. KILLERS, THIEVES. SET FREE BECAUSE OF HARVEY'S PARTNERSHIP WITH BATMAN. SO YEAH, OCCUPIED.
...
AND OZZIE?
I DON'T KNOW, BOSS. MAYBE WE CALL IT A NIGHT? EVERYONE WENT TO COSMO'S. THE DANCE FLOOR IS DEAD OUT THERE.
IT'S #$%^ TEN O'CLOCK. TELL DJ TUNDRA TO BLAST IT, CRANK UP THE DRY ICE--
TUNDRA WENT TO COSMO'S, TOO. TOOK THE ICE WITH HIM.
...FINE, LET'S GO TO COSMO'S THEN. IF THAT'S THE $%^& PLACE TO BE.
MR. COBBLE--
GET MY DANCING SHOES, MOE. THE BRIGHT, SHINY GOLD ONES...
...OH, AND GET THE C-4.


LIKE I SAID, EVERYONE'S OCCUPIED WITH-- UNH!
ENOUGH! WE'RE FALLING APART HERE! GET OFF THIS "OCCUPIED" #$%^, WILL YOU?
NO. OCCUPIED AS IN OCCUPARE. ORIGINAL MEANING, "TO SIEZE CONTROL OF A PLACE." WE'RE LIKE CITIES THAT BANE SACKED. EACH OF US BURNED TO THE GROUND.
NOW? WE'RE NOT "FALLING APART." WE'RE TRYING TO PUT OURSELVES BACK TOGETHER...TAKE BACK SOME MODICUM OF CONTROL.
THEY BURNED ME DOWN, TOO, YOU KNOW.
OF COURSE I KNOW THAT. BUT YOU'RE FIXED NOW, WAY. AND I'M HAPPY FOR YOU. TRULY.
BUT I CAN STILL FEEL THE PARTS OF MY BRAIN THAT AREN'T AS FAST OR ACCURATE AS THEY WERE BEFORE. IT'S LIKE THIS... RIDDLE I CAN'T SOLVE. LIKE THIS CORE PIECE OF ME IS MISSING AND I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S EVER GOING TO COME BACK. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE... NOT ANYMORE.
YEAH, EDDIE, I DO.
AND HOW WE SEIZE BACK CONTROL IS TOGETHER. THAT'S THE ANSWER TO YOUR RIDDLE.
AHHH, I SEE WHAT YOU DID THERE. YOU KNOW, I GOTTA SAY, I LIKE THE YELLOW! YOU'RE ONE OF US, BUDDY.
NOW JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT, WHAT ARE YOU THINKING WE DO ABOUT BRUCE?

THEN.
TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR NEW ABODE, SON. BEAUTIFUL *BLACKGATE PRISON.*
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO WORK OFF MY DEBT.
OH, YOU ARE. IN THERE.
"JUDGE ZUPPA'S GOING TO GIVE YOU AN EASY SIX MONTHS INSTEAD OF A HARD SIX YEARS.
"BUT DURING THAT TIME, YOU'LL BE MY GUY ON THE INSIDE."
DOING WHAT?
TEN PERCENT OF OUR BUSINESS RUNS THOUGH BLACKGATE. THE PLACE HAS A HUNDRED WAYS TO GET THINGS IN AND OUT. AND *YOU?* YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN EVERY SINGLE ONE...


CHING!
CHING



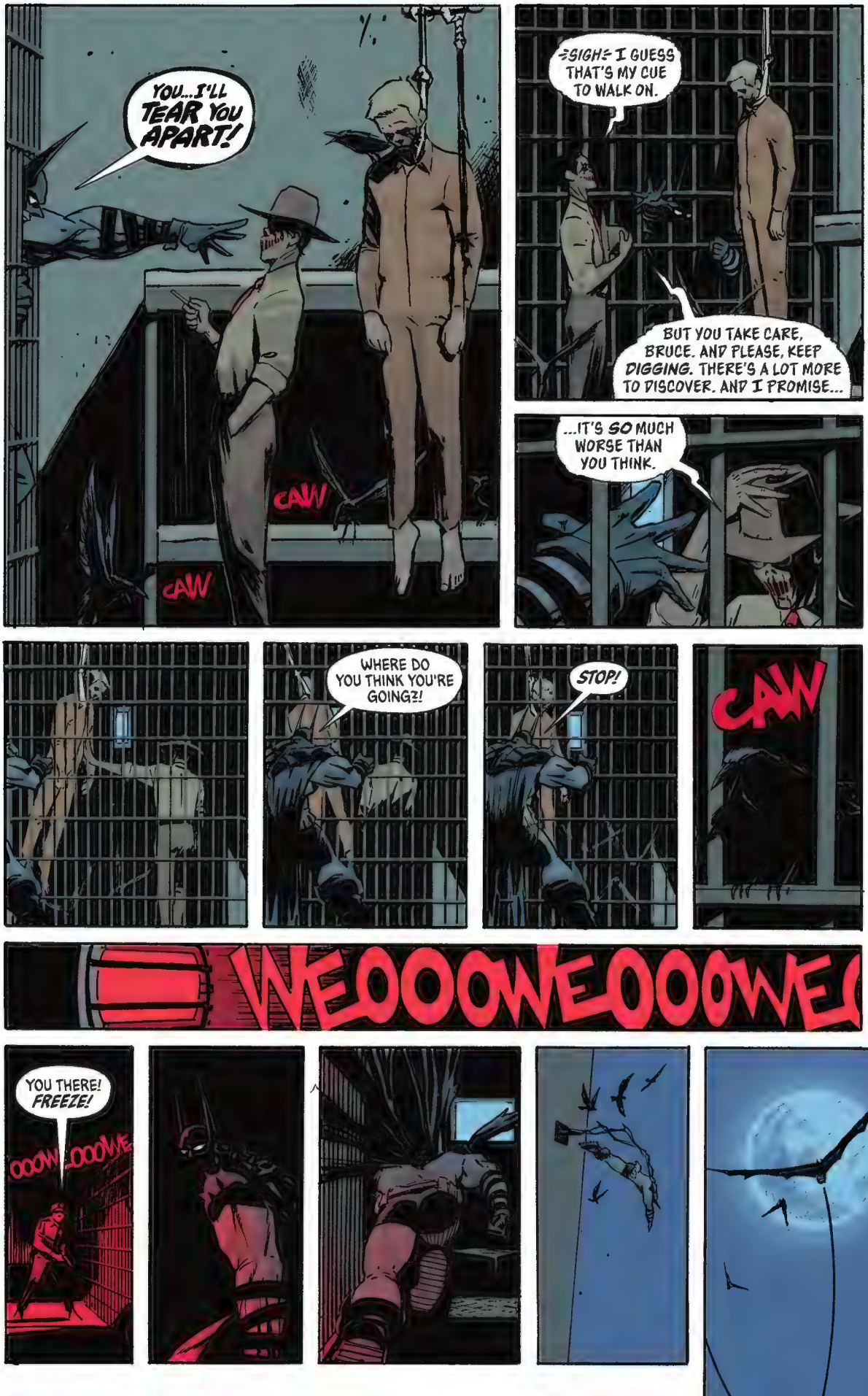
SAY IT, CHILL.
WHAT ARE YOU...YOU CAN'T BE HERE! GUARDS--
SHUT UP.
NO ONE ON EARTH CAN PROTECT YOU FROM ME.
NOT UNTIL I HEAR THAT IT'S A LIE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! WHAT'S A LIE?
THWIP

I WAS GIVEN FILES BY JIM GORDON. FILES THAT CLAIM IT WAS ALL SOME SETUP. THE SCIENCE FAIR CHALLENGE. THE WINNING PROJECT. THE TRIP TO THE ZOO. AND YOU.
ME?
YES, YOU. THE FILES SAY YOU WERE PART OF IT SOMEHOW. THAT YOU WENT TO THE ZOO WITH A SPECIFIC TARGET. THOMAS WAYNE. THAT IT WAS ALL SOME... PLOT. BUT HIS SON, BRUCE, HE COMES HERE EVERY MONTH TO TALK WITH YOU. ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THE ANSWER TO WHY YOU DID IT. AND YOU...YOU GIVE HIM NOTHING BUT MUMBLES, WHISPERS...
...THAT MAN, HE PORES OVER THE TAPES, TRYING TO DECIPHER THEM, DECIPHER YOU. ALL IN AN EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND, TO STOP IT FROM HAPPENING AGAIN TO SOME OTHER KID.
ALL THE FORCES THAT MADE YOU, THE COMPLEX %$#*&@ CIRCUMSTANCES. BUT NOW YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME IT'S THAT SIMPLE? YOU WERE AN AGENT OF SOME MASTER PLAN?!
NO...BUT YOU KNOW SOMETHING? WHY ELSE WOULD YOU SUDDENLY STOP TALKING TO BRUCE WAYNE? AND IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE THEY MOVE YOU TO THIS NEW WING RIGHT AFTER THAT?
HELP ME! SOMEONE! PLEASE!
SAY IT!
SAY IT'S A LIE!
EASY THERE, FRIENDS.
FNAP
...YOU.
YOU KILLED JIM GORDON.
ME? I HEARD IT WAS YOU. BUT MY GUESS? IT JUST BECAME TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HAPPENS A LOT THESE DAYS...

...JOE, HOW ABOUT YOU LET THE TWO OF US TALK? MAYBE GO MAKE YOUR BED?
...SURE. GOOD IDEA.
NOW. FORGIVE ME, BUT I HAVE TO SAY--IT'S SO NICE TO FINALLY TALK TO YOU FACE-TO-FACE AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... BRUCE.
I GET WHY YOU'RE ANGRY, THOUGH, I DO. NONE OF THIS MAKES A LICK OF SENSE. "THE BATMAN PROJECT"? SOME BIG, DECADES-LONG CONSPIRACY TO MAKE YOU INTO THIS?
BUT THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE MISSING THE KEY. THE REASON FOR IT. WHY YOU OF ALL PEOPLE? BUT SEE, THAT'S THE BEST PART.
WHY WOULD I LISTEN TO YOU? YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER ONE OF HIS #$%^ OPERATIVES.
COULD BE. MAYBE I AM SOME "OPERATIVE." TRAVELING THE WORLD, TOPPLING GOVERNMENTS, CAUSING PANIC, YADDA YADDA. OR MAYBE I'M JUST A STRAW MAN OUT FOR A WALK.
BUT WE'RE HERE TO TALK ABOUT YOU. WHY IN THE HELL THIS WAS ALL DONE TO YOU. AND THE REASON IS YOUR MOTHER, BRUCE. BECAUSE MARTHA? SHE WAS A LOYAL MEMBER OF THE COURT OF OWLS. A TERRORIST.
SHUT UP!

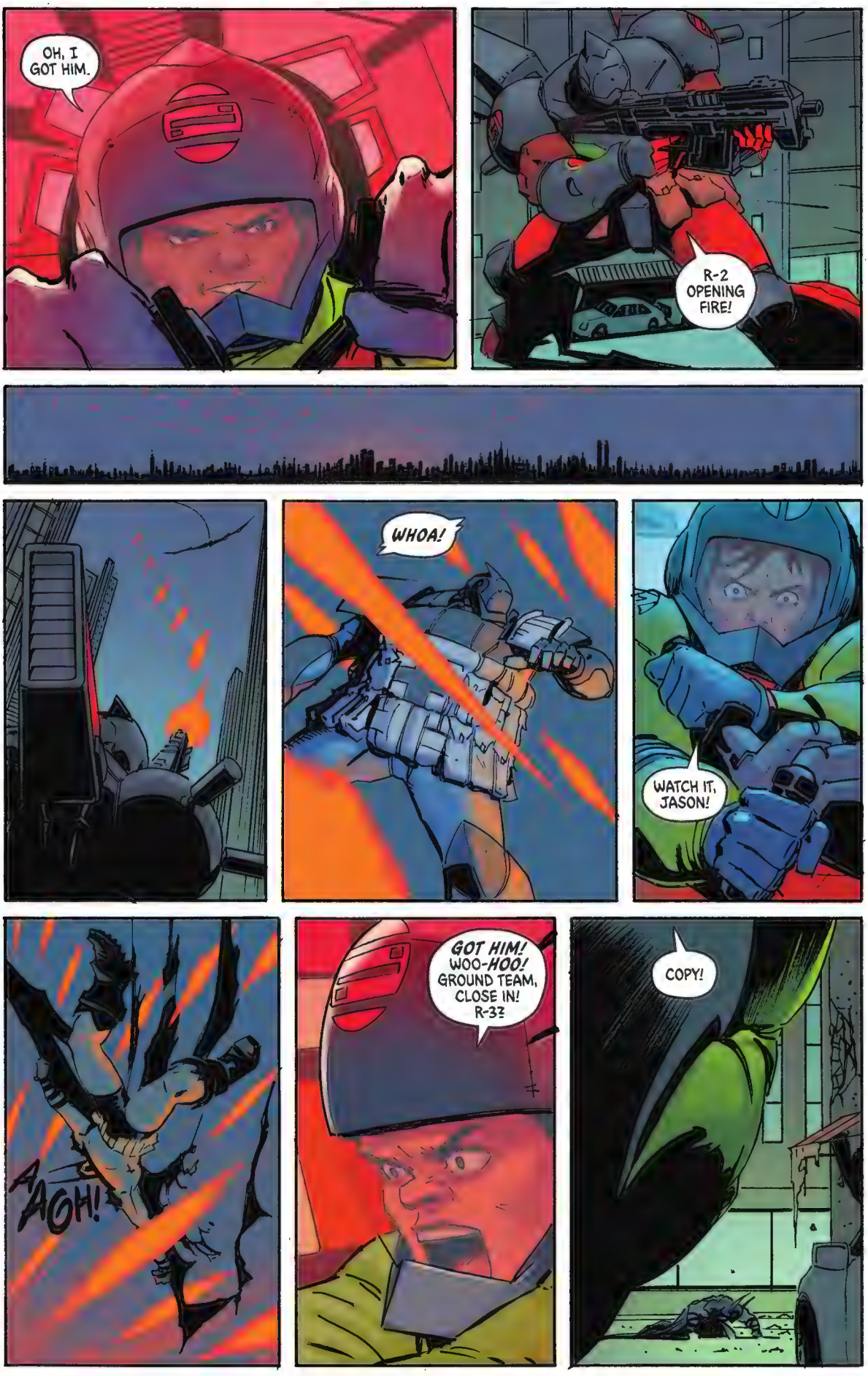
AGH!
SHIK
LIAR...
I'M AFRAID NOT, BUDDY. IT'S THE ONE PART GORDON HID FROM YOU, GOD REST HIS TROUBLED SOUL. HE FIGURED IT'D BE TOO MUCH. BUT IT'S TRUE. IN FACT, IT'S WHERE YOUR MOTHER RAN OFF TO. THEIR "SUPER-SECRET HEADQUARTERS." THOUGH FROM WHAT I HEAR... THAT DIDN'T END TOO WELL, EITHER.
WHAT? MIND REELING? DENYING IT? JUST THINK BACK TO THAT DAY AT THE ZOO. YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER ANY SIGNS? A CAWING FROM HIGH ABOVE, MAYBE?
YEAH, YOU REMEMBER...
NOW, I KNOW IT'S HARD, REALIZING YOUR WHOLE LIFE WAS SOME PROJECT, BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS, IT'S NOT!
SEE, GRIMM AND I, WE THOUGHT IT'D BE FUNNY. AFTER ALL, WHAT'S THE NATURAL PREY OF AN OWL, BRUCE? THAT'S RIGHT... A BAT! THAT'S THE WHY OF YOUR LIFE. BATMAN ISN'T A PROJECT. HE'S A JOKE.
YOU DONE MAKING YOUR BED, JOE?

YEP. ALL DONE.
CAW
CHILLZ! WHAT ARE YOU DOINGZ!
STOP HIM! PLEASE! WHY ARE YOU DOING THISZ!
WHY? THEY SAY WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF FEAR. BUT ME, I DISAGREE. IMAGINE A FARMER. A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, HE FEARED TANGIBLE THINGS THAT MIGHT COME AFTER HIS CROPS. PESTS, DROUGHT. THINGS HE COULD UNDERSTAND, PROTECT AGAINST.
HANG ON!
FLANK
BUT THESE DAYS? THAT SAME FARMER SITS INSIDE IN THE DARK, FEARING THINGS TOO BIG TO COMPREHEND LET ALONE AFFECT. A THOUSAND OF THEM. WAR, PLAGUE, SOCIETAL COLLAPSE, GLOBAL CONSPIRACIES.
ALL WHILE HIS CROPS ROT OUTSIDE.
DON'T DO THIS!
AND THAT'S NOT FEAR. THAT'S SOMETHING NEWLY GROWN, SOMETHING SPECIAL. THAT'S DREAD. KNOWING IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL ONE OF THEM COMES SLOUCHING TOWARD US. YOU CAN HEAR IT, CAN'T YOU?
THE TICKING OF THAT CLOCK, TICK, TICK, TICK. WE ALL CAN. WE'RE ALL FRIENDS IN DREAD.
DON'T!
SO WHY AM I DOING THIS? BECAUSE, BRUCE, WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF DREAD, AND I FOR ONE...
...THINK IT'S WONDERFUL.
SNIP


YOU...I'LL TEAR YOU APART!
CAW
CAW
=SIGH= I GUESS THAT'S MY CUE TO WALK ON.
BUT YOU TAKE CARE, BRUCE. AND PLEASE, KEEP DIGGING. THERE'S A LOT MORE TO DISCOVER. AND I PROMISE...
...IT'S SO MUCH WORSE THAN YOU THINK.
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?!
STOP!
CAW
WEOOOWEOOOWE
YOU THERE! FREEZE!
OOOW OOOWE

TA-DA!
WHAT'S THIS?
YOU DID A GOOD JOB IN BLACKGATE, BRUCE. IT'S TIME TO GRADUATE TO THE BAT.
I'M NOT SOME ENFORCER.
THAT'S WHAT WE ALL SAID, WHEN IT WAS OUR TURN.
PFFT. AT YOUR SIZE, SON, DON'T WORRY. YOU'LL NEVER EVEN HAVE TO USE IT.
BUT EVERYONE HAS TO GO THROUGH IT. YOU'LL DO GREAT. IT'S JUST A BAT. A TOOL.
NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT AT ALL.

...PENNYWORTH?
ARE YOU THERE?
KID! THANK GOD. WHERE ARE YOU?!
HE... KILLED HIM RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.
I COULDN'T STOP IT. IT WAS JUST LIKE MR. GORDON. AND JUST LIKE...
WHO KILLED WHO? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BRUCE?! WHAT THE BLOODY HELL IS GOING ON?!
I...I DON'T KNOW ANYMOR--
STOP! BY AUTHORITY OF THE ROBIN INITIATIVE...
...YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
WOOSH
AND...HE'S RUNNING.
ROBIN-2, YOU GOT HIM?


OH, I GOT HIM.
R-2 OPENING FIRE!
WHOA!
WATCH IT, JASON!
AAGH!
GOT HIM! WOO-HOO! GROUND TEAM, CLOSE IN! R-3?
COPY!

R-3 CLOSING IN! DUKE, STEPH?
KROOM
R-4, ON IT, TIM!
R-5, RIGHT HERE.
OKAY, MOB HIM!
BATMAN! YOU WOULD BE WISE...
...TO STAY DOWN.
KID, GET OUT OF THERE! RUN!
NO.
ALL RIGHT THEN, BATMAN, TIME'S UP.
NEXT ISSUE: BATMAN VS. ROBINS!

# ABSOLUTE GREEN ARROW #1 PREVIEW

WRITER PORNSAK PICHETSHOTE
ART RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
COLORS MARCELO MAIOLO
LETTERS JEFF POWELL

...STAY... BA--
>AK<
>A<
><
HEY--HEY! WHOEVER YOU ARE, I'LL--I'LL PAY YOU WHATEVER, OKAY?
JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT!

AN EXAMPLE.
DETAILS ARE STILL UNRELEASED CONCERNING THE DEATH OF BILLIONAIRE JUBAL SLADE--A TECH ENTREPRENEUR BEST KNOWN AS THE COFOUNDER OF THE ELECTRONIC TRADING PLATFORM GREENARROWS TRADING...
TO BE CONTINUED IN ABSOLUTE GREEN ARROW #1 ON SALE IN MAY!

THE ABSOLUTE UNIVERSE EXPANDS WITH
TWO UNBELIEVABLE NEW 6-ISSUE MINISERIES

ALL IN

# ABSOLUTE GREEN ARROW

WRITTEN BY
PORNSAK PICHETSHOTE

ART BY
RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

NO TRICK ARROWS.
NO MERCY.
ABSOLUTE HUNTER.

AVAILABLE MAY

# ABSOLUTE CATWOMAN

WRITTEN BY
CHE GRAYSON AND SCOTT SNYDER

ART BY
BENGAL

ALL THE WEALTH.
ALL THE GEAR.
ABSOLUTE APEX PREDATOR.

AVAILABLE JUNE

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

# BARBARA GORDON BREAKOUT

DC NEXT LEVEL

## INTERVIEW WITH MARIKO TAMAKI

**Survival is the name of the game in *Barbara Gordon: Breakout*. Eisner Award-winning writer Mariko Tamaki, alongside fan-favorite artist Amancay Nahuelpan, takes one of DC's most strategic and resilient heroes and strands her in a remote prison designed for the world's most dangerous inmates, many of whom she helped put away. Outnumbered and cut off from her team, Barbara must rely on instinct, intelligence, and sheer will to endure.**

### A MASTERMIND CUT OFF.

The idea behind this book is that Barbara Gordon has spent much of her time as part of the best team. What makes her incredible is that she's someone who can lead a team to victory. So the question became: What happens when you take someone who's so good at that and pull her out of that environment?

Now she's trapped in an island prison in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by people she helped put behind bars.

### SURVIVAL STARTS HERE.

At its heart, this is a story about survival, surviving an impossible situation. You don't need to know Barbara Gordon's full history as Batgirl to understand what it means to be placed in a terrifying environment where you're intensely outnumbered.

You don't have to know the entire comic book canon to love a hero. That's something DC does incredibly well. You don't need every detail of every version to connect with an individual story.

### BREAK THE SYSTEM. BREAK THE HERO.

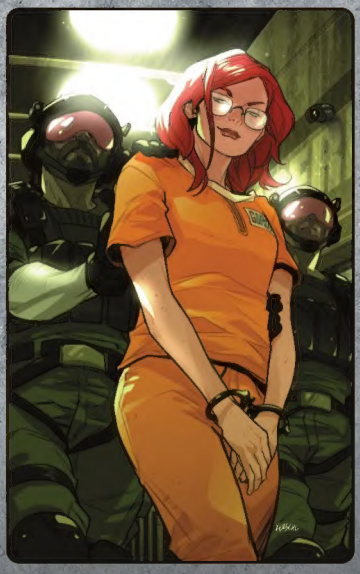
With any prison story, there are tropes. We're used to seeing writers play with those conventions, and part of the job is identifying the foundational beats of a prison story and then finding ways to subvert them.

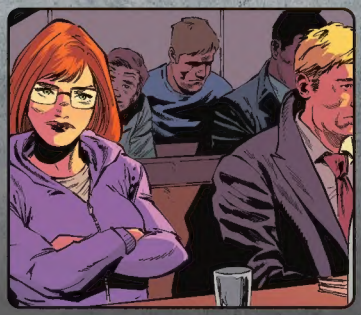
It's also about uncovering unexpected character moments. Superheroes are usually at the top of their game. It sounds harsh to say you want to unsettle a character, but sometimes you do—you want to put them in a situation they can't immediately respond to, something that throws them off balance.

### A PRISON NO ONE ESCAPES.

This is a place where GCPD Commissioner Vandal Savage has sent everyone he doesn't want in the general population, and it's not a day care center. You can't raise your hand and expect someone to help you. The guards stationed there aren't there to assist anyone; their job is specifically not to help.

My artist, Amancay Nahuelpan, has drawn this prison as something truly terrifying. It feels like the loneliest, least inviting place on the planet. It's inspired by the worst aspects of prison, very Alcatraz-adjacent. Even if you managed to escape, where would you go? The waters surrounding it are filled with dangers. There is no easy way out.





### A WORLD YOU CAN FEEL.

Amancay and I previously worked together on *Crush & Lobo*. With that first issue you do with an artist, you're getting a feel for how they work, how they draw faces, bodies, spaces, and the relationships between all those elements.

I have tremendous faith in his ability to create this world, the mood, the tone, the atmosphere. Everything I've seen so far has been incredible. I love what he does. I feel like I'm writing to what he draws, and he's drawing to what I'm writing. It's a really amazing collaboration.

**DON'T MISS**
**BARBARA GORDON: BREAKOUT**
**ON SALE MAY**

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